

*The Power, Vertue, and Influence of
Christ's Resurrection; and the Ex-
cellency of Knowing That above,
and beyond all other Knowledge.*

for Mr Wynne A

695.9.11.
23

SERMON

Preach'd before the

University of Oxford,

A T

St. Mary's, on Easter-Tuesday, 1718.

By *WILLIAM TILLY*, D.D.

Late Fellow of C. C. C. Oxon, now Rector of *Albury* near
Ricot, and of *Godington* in *Oxfordshire*, and Chaplain to the
Right Honourable MONTAGUE Earl of ABINGDON.

O X F O R D:

Printed by *L. Lichfield*, for *Edw. Whistler*; and are
to be sold by *J. Knapton*, and *H. Clements*, Book-
sellers in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, *London*. 1718.

Price 6 d.

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and beyond all other Knowledge.

JOHN BARON A
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D E D I C A T I O N

~~stands, Sir, have been the happy~~

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~~Thoughts more powerfully and firm-~~

~~ly on the most Delightful and~~

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~~der the Closest State and Time;~~

~~of my Mourning.~~

TO THE

REVEREND and VERY WORTHY

Dr. JOHN BARON,

Master of Baliol-College, and Vice-
Chancellor of the University of
OXFORD.

S I R,

THIS plain Discourse, as, at
first, it took its Rise and Birth
from your Order, so now, in
Right, and Reason, and Justice, it
returns *home* to your self: I wish it
may not a little reflect upon you, in
that your Kindness to your Friend
may seem to have influenc'd your
Judgment in your Appointment of the
Preacher. To my self, in the mean
time, I cannot but think it a Provi-
dential Comfort, that your Com-

DEDICATION

mands, SIR, have been the happy Occasion to me of engaging my Thoughts more thorowly and firmly on the most Delightful and Chearful Subject in *Christianity*, under the Closest State and Time; under the Nearest and Justest Reason of my Mourning.

And indeed, SIR, I have constantly receiv'd at your Hands, for a Course of many Years, so very numerous, and such signal Tokens of your Kindness and Civility, that if I should go to instance in any of them, I should be drawn on to insist on more; and all, at present, I have not room to mention before you, if I would; nor will this Paper, nor your Important Affairs, nor the Publick Good, admit I should do so, by detaining you so long, if I could. Besides the Common and General Advantages, which I could speak of, that flow from you on all Occasions, which all Men are Partakers of, that come within the Reach and Influence of your Acquaintance or Direction. But

DEDICATION

But I look upon it as the more Immediate Honour and Happiness of your own most Regular, Learned, Excellent, and Exemplary Society, that they are severally Members of a Body, of which you Your self are Head, both in Place and Merit.

For you know, SIR, how to treat and deal with humane Nature as you should do, and as some others would do, if they knew how, with the Justice of a Wife, Good, and Aweful Authority, where there is Room and Reason for it; and with the Sweetness and Pleasures of a Kind, Obliging, Generous, Chearful, and Courteous Behaviour, upon all Occasions.

Your Authority others have always thought they had reason, and were willing to allow you, more than you assum'd; and you have ever employ'd it for the Honour and Satisfaction of those, by whom you were entrusted with it, and to the best Interest and Advantage of all others.

DEDICATION.

I shall only appeal, for the Truth of what I say, to those often repeated Evidences of a True, Just, Calm; Courageous Wisdom and Spirit, in Government, which we have had a very Melancholy Occasion to observe in you of late. In those rude Days of *Insolence*, when your Staff of Just and Peaceable Authority was oblig'd to such an Unequal Clash with the Sword and Sons of Violence; nor could the *Muses themselves* defend *their* Sons: At a Time, when the Noise and Cry of Injury and Disorder, such as scarce ever before, was heard within the Walls of our *Sacred Mother*, and ascended above her loftiest Towers; and she her self look'd pale, and almost trembled for her Children: Then, SIR, you bravely, dutifully, and seasonably interpos'd to take her by the Hand, to stand up for her Defence and Comfort, and to screen and rescue her Safety, her Interests, her Reputation, from the Impiety and Fury of ill Men; and by a Firm, Steady, Unerring, and Restraining Hand,

DEDICATION.

Hand, in those Tempestuous Days,
you conducted and brought off that
Precious Vessel whole and safe, in
which our dearest Treasures, our
Hearts, our Affections, *were*, and
are embark'd; and not ours only, but
those, in a great measure, of the
Church of God it self, that though
by the Violence of the Season, 'twas
driven, and sometimes bulg'd, it ne-
ver split nor over-set.

How many private and publick
Thanks are owing to you for this, and
all other Benefits of your happy Go-
vernment, I know, SIR, your great
Modesty will not suffer *You* to hear;
but the Justice and Gratitude of
Others will oblige *Them* to think and
to remember. For my own part, I
here Thank you in particular, both
for Publick and Private Good; and am

S I R,

Your very much Oblig'd,

truly Affectionate, Faithful,

Humble Servant,

WILLIAM TILLY.

DEDICATION

Hand, in those Tempestuous Days
you conducted and brought off that
Precious Vessel whole and safe, in
which our dearest Liberties, our
Hearts, our Affections, wives, and
are embarked; and not ours only, but
those in a great measure, of the
Church of God in this, that through
by the violence of the Scalon, was
driven, and sometimes obliged, it no
yet split nor over-set.

How many private and publick
Thanks are owing to you for this, and
all other Benefits of your happy Go-
vernment, I know, Sir, your great
Modesty will not suffer you to hear,
but the Justice and Gratitude of
Others will oblige you to think and
to remember. For my own part, I
here Thank you in particular, both
for Publick and Private Good; and am

Y^r R^{ty}

Your very much Obliged

and Affectionate Father,

Thomas Burnet

WILLIAM TULLY

PHILIPPIANS III. 10.

Former Part of the Verse.

*That I may know Him, and the Power
of His Resurrection —*

TH E S E Words are here given us in by St. Paul, as a Reason to justify himself in one particular Part of his Proceeding; his leaving so strangely, and Deserting his Jewish, Legal Rites and Services, to which he was known to have been formerly so much addicted, and in the Defence and Vindication of which he had so warmly, and so remarkably engag'd. This, as it had been Matter of the highest Provocation against him among his own Country-men the Jews; so was it no less an Occasion of Surprize and Admiration to the Gentiles.

That a Person born within the Covenants of God, that had the best-grounded Title to the Priviledges and Promises of the Law of Moses, undoubtedly descended from a Tribe of Israel, thoroughly enter'd and skill'd in the Profession and Principles, and zealous in the Observances of the strictest Sect of that Religion; That had their Doctrines and Tenets instill'd into him, and inbred with him, from his Tender Years, by Derivation from his Parents, and under the Institution of the Ablest Masters; *A Pharisee himself, and the Son of a Pharisee, and brought up at the Feet of Gamaliel;* One, that was so deeply interested, and an Accessory in the Persecution of another Religion just then newly come up; that had prosecuted it with Zeal, even to Rage and Fury. A Religion to which his whole Sect had been always the most bitter, profess'd, and inveterate

Acts 26 5.

Acts 23 6.

Acts 22 3.

Acts 26.

11.

Math 22.

rate 15.

Mark 3. 6. rate Enemies, and were constantly upbraided as such
 Luke 6. 7. by the first Institutor and Founder of it; That a Per-
 son so beset and foreclos'd with Interest and Pre-
 judices, on every hand, should yet turn Profelyte to
 that *very Religion* he had so much hated, and which
 Acts 28. was so much every where reproach'd, despis'd, and
 22. spoken against; and against which himself had
 Acts 9. 1. *breath'd out Threat'nings and Slaughter*; That he
 should at the same time entirely quit and abandon all
 his former high Pretences, totally forfeit his Reputa-
 tion amongst his Brethren, and let go all his legal Pri-
 viledges of a suddain. *This* was an Event so very ex-
 traordinary, so very odd and unaccountable, that it
 might well puzzle and confound the Minds of Men to
 answer for it; It was not to be done according to the
 common Laws and Rules of Life, or Measures of
 Proceeding; especially, since it happen'd in a Person
 too, known well before of a Strict, Vertuous and Re-
 gular Life, and one that always *spoke forth the Words*
 Acts 26. 5. *of Truth and Soberness*.
 25.

The Apostle therefore, since no one else could do it
 for him, comes in this Chapter of my Text to return
 an Apology for himself; and therein he fairly allows,
 in the first place, these Objections against him their full
 Weight and Authority; nay he raises, strengthens and
 heightens them, by the Force and Vehemence of his
 own divine and noble Eloquence: *Though I might*
 Phil. 3. 4, *have Confidence in the Flesh*, says he, *if any other think*
 5, 6, 7, &c. *he hath whereof to boast in the Flesh, I more. Circum-*
cis'd the Eighth Day, of the Stock of Israel, of the
Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; ac-
ording to the Law a Pharisee; concerning Zeal persecu-
ting the Church; touching the Righteousness which is in
the Law blameless. And then, for his Departure from
 all these high, and, as he once thought, valuable Ad-
 vantages, he only assigns this Plea for himself, His ex-
 ceeding great Affection for, and Admiration of that
 same poor persecuted Faith *which once he destroy'd*.

Gal. 1. 23. That he had discover'd in *that* such a Fulness of
 Divine Grace and Excellency, when duly consider'd,
 and

and attended to, such unfathomable Depths, such unspeakable Mysteries of God's Infinite Love, Mercy, Wisdom, Holiness, and Power, to be found in the Religion and Sufferings of his Crucified Master, that he could think nothing too much to part with, in order to his embracing *Christianity* : Nay, he accounted *all Things but Loss*, that is, *less than nothing*, and *phil. 3. 8.* *but as Dung, that he might win Christ ; that he might know him and the Power of his Resurrection.*

The Apostle instances in the *Resurrection of Christ*, as the very Sum and Comprehension ; as, indeed, the Whole of the *Christian Religion*. He does the same in another Place, in his Charge to his Disciple and Son *Timothy*, when he would give him a short comprehensive Rule and Advice, how he should take care and behave himself in the Conduct of his whole *Christian Faith and Practice* ; *Remember*, says he, *that 2 Tim. 2.* *Jesus Christ, of the Seed of David, was raised from the Dead, according to my Gospel.* For indeed 'tis the *Resurrection* of our Blessed Lord, that is the very Foundation of our Faith and Piety ; which, like a Vital Spirit, runs through it all ; without which the Truth and Practice of *Christianity* must necessarily fail and sink to the Ground ; for, *If Christ be not risen, then is your 1 Cor. 15.* *Faith vain, our Preaching also is vain.* So that 'tis this ^{14,} great Principle of our Religion, that gives Life, and Activity, and Energy to all others : 'Tis like the *Prime Orb* in Religion, it rolls on its Course, and comprehends within it, and carries along with it all the rest, directing and influencing all their Motions.

'Twas for his Knowledge of this, that *St. Paul* assures us he had stripp'd himself of all his other boasted Advantages, that he had renounc'd all other Interests to embrace it. *That he might know Christ, and the Power of his Resurrection.*

In my Proceeding on these Words I shall consider these *Two* following Particulars :

First, The Power, Vertue, and Influence of the *Resurrection* of our Blessed Lord, both towards the Glory

of God, and the Happiness of Man: *That I may know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection.*

Secondly, The Nature, Excellence, and Preference of this Divine Knowledge above all other; so St. Paul tells us, he had left all, *that he might know Him, and the Power of His Resurrection.*

The First Thing here propos'd to be spoken to, is *the Power, Vertue, and Influence* of our Blessed Lord's *Resurrection*, both towards the Glory of God, and the Happiness of Man.

Ephes. 1. 19. By *the Power of His Resurrection* we are not only to understand that Active, Effective, Operative, Almighty *Power of God*, by which He rose, and which, by the Apostle, in another Place, is term'd the *Exceeding Greatness of His Power*; but we are to take it in a more Large and Extensive Sense, so as to import *the Influence* and Efficacy of *His Resurrection* it self, of any sort whatever, towards the producing God's Designs, and its own Divine and very Natural Effect and Consequence. In this Sense the Word *δύναμις* is frequently us'd by the best *Greek Writers*; in none more often than in that great Oracle of Humane Wisdom (as he is more than once represented by the Learned and Judicious (a) Mr. Hooker) I may add too, that Great Fountain of Humane Eloquence (we have (b) Tully's Authority for it) even *Aristotle* himself. Not that we are to exclude the former Interpretation of the Active *Power* of God his Father, in *His Resurrection*, by which that Wonderful and Astonishing Event was brought about; and which the Apostle, we have heard, represents in Terms of the highest Advantage, when he calls it the *Exceeding Greatness of His Power*; but then we are to include the Latter Sense of the Apostle's Words likewise, because they are certainly capable of both: And where a Text of Holy Scripture is diffusive, and may be fairly explain'd into more Sen-

(a) *Eccles. Pol. B. 1. Sect. 6. Item, Sect. 16.*

(b) *Cic. Acadm. Quæst. Lib. 4. Veniet Flumen Orationis Aureum fundens Aristoteles.*

ses than one, there 'tis a Piece of honest Thrift, and spiritual Husbandry (if we'll believe * Bp. *Sanderſon's* Authority) to take and use it in all. Thus taken then *the Power of Chriſt's Reſurrection*, in general, involves in it theſe *Two* following moſt Divine and Bleſſed Influences :

First, As it tends to create and form in the Minds of Men the moſt High, Aweful, Venerable, Sacred Apprehenſions and Conceptions of Almighty God, of His Infinite Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, and, above all, His Goodneſs and Eternal Love to Men.

Secondly, Its Power and Influence may be conſider'd as it is a Principle moſt prevailing towards the Reformation of Mankind, to reduce Men from the Ways of Errour, Sin, and Vice, and to lead them to Obedience, and to encourage and ſupport them in a Religious Life and Practice, in order to their Eternal Welfare, the Salvation of their Souls.

In the *fiſt* place then the *Reſurrection* of our Bleſſed Saviour tends to create and form in the Minds of Men the moſt High, Aweful, Venerable, Sacred Apprehenſions and Conceptions of Almighty God ; of His Infinite Power, Wiſdom, Juſtice, and, above all, His Goodneſs, and Eternal Love to Men. For the *Reſurrection* of our Lord was the Great Scene of God's Glory, as well as of Man's Felicity : Therein ſhone out the Brighteſt Beams, Characters, and Perfections of the Divine Nature ; ſo far as they are capable of being exhibited to, or receiv'd by the Minds of Angels or Men : Thoſe more eſpecially, the Milder Attributes, the Chief Features of his Divinity, his Mercy, and Philanthropy ; theſe were ſeen above all Reſplendent and Glorious in that Day, and in that Great Tranſaction.

His Power in the *fiſt* place appear'd Exuberant, and is ſo expreſs'd to us by the Apoſtle, in Terms of

* *Serm. 2. ad Clerum. - Pag. 25. Edit. 8.*

1 Cor. 2. 13. such Exaggeration, as are not to be parallel'd in Humane Writings; * such Words as the *Wisdom of Man* never taught him, but the *Holy Ghost* taught him; for their Fulness, Force, and Energy, most observable. He calls it (*Eph. i. 19, 20.*) *The Exceeding Greatness of His Power towards us who believe, according to the Mighty Working of His Power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the Dead.* The Greek is yet more strongly expressive; τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, the Excessive, Over-abundant, Over-bearing Greatness of his Power; and again, καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς κεφαλῆς τῆς ἐκκλησίας αὐτοῦ, according to the most Lively, Effective, Vigorous Force of the Might of his Strength. Here we find almost all the Words, that in that most copious Language express Efficacy, Force, Activity, and Might, thrown and heap'd together, in order to raise our Imagination, if possible, to the Size and Height of this Great Instance of the Almighty Power of God in our Saviour's Resurrection.

And the Apostle did not without some Reason express himself thus to his *Ephesian* Disciples, who had been before *Gentiles*, and so once under strong Persuasions of the Absurdity and utter Impossibility of a Resurrection from the Dead. We know (a) *Pliny* delivers it as his Opinion, that a Restoration of a Person from the Dead, was one of those things, that was insuperable, even to the Omnipotence of God Himself. And a Greater than *Pliny*, *St. Paul*, intimates as much as this, that the Heathens thought so, in his Appeal before *Festus* and *Agrippa*; *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead?* Implying, that it was esteem'd so, and the general Opinion of the *Gentile* World. And we may learn no less by the Result of the same Apostle's Preaching before the *University of Athens*, those curious, refin'd, and inquisitive Spirits, that had Questions of all sorts, of Humane Wisdom and Philoso-

* Bp. Pearson, *Artic. 5. Page 256.*

(a) *Lib. 2. c. 7.*

phy, tofs'd to and fro, and bandied amongst them; and sifted thoroughly, as far as 'twas possible, by the mere Wit and Eloquence of Men, and canvass'd on every side: And yet these very Men themselves, who could hear the Apostle with Patience enough, and perhaps Pleasure, on other Parts of his Subject, while he spoke to them in Strains of Eloquence not inferiour, but I think much superiour to their own; when he once came to touch upon the *Resurrection* of the Dead, immediately flung from him, ridicul'd him *Acts 17.* as a vain and idle Enthusiast, and exploded his Do-^{32.}

ctrine as an absurd unaccountable Novelty: *When they heard of the Resurrection of the Dead*, the Text tells us, *some mock'd, and others said, We will hear thee again of this Matter*; those who were pretty well dispos'd amongst them, yet these Men, it seems, were not satisfied upon this Point, it was a *strange thing* *Acts 17.* *brought to their Ears*, they knew not what it meant. ^{21.}

And as to the Sentiments of the *Jews* about this Matter, though they could not well totally disbelieve it, for the Generality of them, because they had had Instances of it amongst themselves, in the Miracles of *Elijah* and *Elisha*, yet they seem not to have acted much, at least in the Elder Ages of that Church, upon the Perswasion of a General *Resurrection*; and we know there was one whole Sect amongst them that entirely denied it; *not knowing the Scriptures*, indeed, *Matth. 22.* *nor the Power of God.* ^{19.}

And how hard it was to more than common and vulgar Apprehensions, the Prophet *Ezekiel* sufficiently shews, in his Reply to the Question God put to him in the Valley; *Son of Man can these dry Bones live?* To which his Answer is, by way of Appeal back to God's *Ezek. 37.* ^{3.} own Omniscience; *O Lord God Thou knowest*; clearly and plainly intimating the extreme Difficulty of the thing, that it was indeed beyond the Line and Stretch of Humane Comprehension, though not without the Reach and Compass of Divine Power. This Instance of the Prophet, 'tis thought, and very probably, was transacted within him, by a Divine Impression upon his

his Fancy and Imagination, by way of Vision ; but still it expresses his Sense and Judgment on the Matter, as much as if it had been extrinsecal and real. So very unconceivable to the Conceptions of mortal Men, and therefore the more great and noble, was this miraculous Evidence of *the Power of God*, that appear'd in the *Resurrection* of His Son !

Again, The Wisdom of God was no less eminent and conspicuous in this most wonderful Event. For how many gracious and glorious Ends and Purposes of God's Own and His Son's Honour, and of His Grace and Favour to Men, does it serve and answer ! How pregnant is it with Heavenly Blessings ! Into how many Divine and Happy Consequences is it capable of being resolv'd ! By this He clearly and openly vindicated His Son's Innocence and His Divine Authority, Who had died as a Malefactor, as a Blasphemer, as an Impostor ; and spoke out openly to the World, after

Matth. 3. 17. all their Rage and Malice against Him, *This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased ; Thou art My Son, this Day have I begotten Thee ; Yet have I set My*

Pf. 2. 6, 7. *King upon My Holy Hill of Sion.* By this He confirm'd the Truth and Authority of His Gospel ; for the Rising from the Dead is surely the strongest Confirmation that God can give to a Prophet, to put beyond all Dispute his Divine Authority and Commission. By this we have our Justification ; for Who is

Rom. 8. 34. *He now that condemneth ! It is Christ that died ; yea, rather, that is risen again.* For by raising His Son, God declar'd freely that He had forgiven the World their Trespases and Sins ; in that He releas'd and deliver'd Him out of the Prison of Mortality, Who was our Pledge and Surety, when he knock'd off the Chains and Shackles of Death, and let the Prisoner go free. By this we have the Peace of our own Consciences, the Comfort of God's Favour, and our Reconciliation with Him ; *Therefore being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Rom. 5. 1.

By this Christ broke and overturn'd the Power of Satan, stripp'd him of all his Strength, subdued and vanquish'd

vanquish'd him, disarray'd all his Forces, overthrew his Kingdom of Darkneſs, expos'd his Policy: By this all thoſe helliſh Feats and Meaſures he had been practiſing before, were defeated, diſappointed, confounded, and that very gracious and good End for the Salvation of Men, accompliſh'd; and by thoſe very Means too, by which he had ſought to prevent and cut it off; by all the wicked Artifice that his black Realm of Darkneſs could poſſibly invent, or the Malice and Power of their Prince, the Devil himſelf, ſuggeſt.

He thought, and hoped (but God's Goodneſs will always be too hard for his Malice) and preſum'd, in the Death of Chriſt, to have ſeen an End both of his Perſon and of his Doctrin: But how, to his eternal Diſappointment and Diſgrace, was he blank'd and confounded! When he ſaw That very Perſon whom he, by his wicked and curſed Inſtruments, had brought to His Grave, ariſing gloriouſly from it, opening the *Brazen Gates* of Death, *breaking all the Bars of Iron* and Adamant aſunder, *triumphing* over all his Infernal Enemies, and *leading Captivity captive*. Iſa. 45. 2.
Col. 2. 15.
Ephes. 4. 8.

And was not the *Reſurrection* of our Bleſſed Lord a Draught and Exhibition of God's Wiſdom? In which we may view ſo many gracious Ends and Purpoſes effected for the Salvation of Mankind? In *That*, he gave us, for our moſt powerful Encouragement and Incitement to Goodneſs, and to quicken our Induſtry in Holineſs, the moſt perfect Pattern of our Nature; what 'tis capable of being, ſuch as it never was before, nor could hope to be, but ſuch as it certainly ſhall be; and He will make it ſo, by his All-subduing Power, if we be found obedient to his Laws: For *He ſhall change our vile Body, and make it like unto His Glorious Body, by that Mighty Power by which He is able to ſubdue all things unto Himſelf: And we know that when He ſhall appear we ſhall be like Him, for we ſhall ſee Him as He is*. Phil. 3.
21.
1 Joh. 3.

We have now no reaſon to queſtion whether God's Power be ſufficient for our Happineſs, in the utmoſt Capacities of our Souls and Bodies. We are now no longer under a trembling Uncertainty about our Immortality, our Eternal and Infinite Duration, our Future State;

nor are we left to dispute, and quake, and shiver, at the melancholy Apprehension and Suspicion, whether we shall be any thing at all, or what we shall be hereafter. We may *now* venture boldly into the grim Cave of Death, despise, insult, and trample upon all the Terrors of the Grave : For, by *His Glorious Resurrection*, our Blessed Lord has delivered us from their Power, and

Heb. 2. 14, 15. through Death hath destroyed him that had the Power of Death, and hath deliver'd them, who, through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time subject to Bondage.

By *Christ's Resurrection* likewise God answer'd the prime and main Intention of the most important Services of his former Legal Institution ; and that was another Argument of his Divine Wisdom. (a) By rising to His Father, *Christ* offer'd up himself as the *First Fruits from the Dead*, like the *Wave-Offering* in the Jewish Law, to sanctify the whole Harvest of the General Resurrection of the Just, when he will come to gather His Saints into His Heavenly Garner. By this

Christ answer'd the Sacred Character of the *High Priest*, and fulfill'd it in His Own Person, of entering into the *Holy of Holies* ; by the previous Means of *His Resurrection* there appearing, in the Presence, and before the

Isai. 57. 15. Rev. 15. 8. Seat of Infinite Majesty and Mercy, in the High and Holy Place, in the Great Temple of God in Heaven, with

His Body and Blood in the Hands of his Divinity, the Price of our Redemption in Himself : By which He never ceases to prevail for Attonement and Acceptation to His Church, in the Presence of His Almighty Father.

I might here, if there were Room, enumerate a great many more Instances than these, in which it would appear, that *Christ* risen from the Dead is the *Wisdom of God*, as well as we have shewn Him before to be the *Power of God*.

If we consider, in the next place, the Justice and Righteousness of God, *That in our Lord's Resurrection shines out as clear as the Light, and His Just Dealing as the Noon day.* Therein we behold the most Absolute

and Perfect, yet the most Afflicted and Persecuted Vertue and Piety receiving Its Crown and Reward, from the Immediate Hand of Severe and Impartial Justice; a Crown of Righteousness from the Hand of God the Father to the Son, that shines in Glory next to his Own! Here we see the deepest and most grievous Sufferings, return'd with an infinite and eternal Weight of Glory! He, that was *crown'd with Thorns*, and *plow'd with Scourges*, is now become the Immediate Assessor of God's Throne, and sits at his Right Hand in Glory, Incarnate God for ever; Next only to his Almighty Father, above all the Universe besides; above all Power, and Dignity, and Dominion, and Honour and Excellence; and shall reign King and Lord of Glory, World without End. For because *He humbled Himself unto Death, even the Death of the Cross, therefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name; That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* So highly, we see, God honours him, that he accounts his Glory his Own, and demands Obedience and Submission to him from his Creatures, upon the Bonds of their Allegiance to himself. And that we might honour him too as the Father honours him, and as we *honour the Father*, therefore did God shew forth the exceeding Greatness of his Power, in raising him from the Dead, and setting him at his Own Right Hand in the *Heavenly Places; far above all Principality and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but in that which is to come; and hath put all Things under His Feet; and gave Him to be Head over all Things, to the Church* for which he died.

Phil. 2 8, 9, 10, 11.

Joh. 5. 23.

Ephes. 1. 20.

Once more, God's Goodness and his Eternal Love to Man, appear'd most Fair, Amiable, and Engaging, enough to attract and entertain the Eyes of Angels and Men for ever, in the *Resurrection* of the Great Redeemer of the World, the Head and Representative of all his Brethren.

By Vertue of *His Resurrection* all his Saints rose with him, out of the *Darkness* and *Dust* of Death, into the *Life*, and *Light* of Glory. By *the Influence of His Resurrection* 'tis, that we have so strong an Assurance of and Title to our own : So that the Apostle speaks of it as a Thing already past and done, equally sure as if it were present, it cannot fail; *He hath rais'd us up together*, says he, *and hath made us sit together in Heavenly Places, in Christ Jesus.*

He, by *His Resurrection* also, is approv'd our Lord of Glory; *All Power is given Him in Heaven and Earth* to reward and crown his Servants: 'Tis from his Hands that the World is to receive its Sentence and final Doom : For God has given evident Proof of his being Universal Lord and Judge, by employing thus his Divine and Infinite Power in raising him from the Grave : So the Apostle argues in his Sermon to the wise Athenians, *He has appointed a Day in which He will judge the World, by that Man whom He hath ordain'd ; whereof He hath given Assurance unto all Men, in that He hath raised him from the Dead.*

And then, how great a Dignity and Honour has God done to Humane Nature, in thus advancing it ! That he has rais'd and carried our Nature to such an Excess and Height of Glory, as to lift it to his Throne ! What an amazing Instance of the Divine Condescension, and our Exaltation is this ! Founded upon his Love to our Nature ! His Eternal, Immense, Infinite Love (I had almost said his Fondness) for Man, his Favourite, his youngest *Prodigal Son*.

Thus have I endeavour'd to lay before you, in as short a Compass as I could, on so diffusive a Subject, what occur'd to my Thoughts as most necessary, of *the Power* and Efficacy of our Blessed Saviour's *Resurrection*, in respect both to the Glory of God and the Happiness of Man. I come now to consider,

Secondly, The Vertue and Influence of it, as it respects our Duty, and is the most powerful and Prevailing Principle towards the Reformation of Mankind, to reduce Men from Errour, from the Ways of Sin and Vice,

and

and to lead them to Obedience; and to encourage and support them in a Religious Life and Practice, in order to their Eternal Welfare, the Salvation of their immortal Souls.

Thus, Christ risen from the Dead and ascended into Glory, is a mighty Engagement on us to reverence and honour our own Nature, which he has so highly dignified, and that bears so very near a relation to his Divinity. And this will put us in mind to regard and reverence our selves, and to respect and honour our Brethren, more especially according to the Faith, of what Name, Title, Distinction, Character, Station, Fortune or Condition in the World, soever they be: For the least of them all are his Brethren, and he will reward us for treating them as such. This should admonish us likewise how we do any Thing that is base and ungenerous (as all Sin is) apt to defile, to disgrace, to disparage our Nature, which is of *His Flesh and His Bones*, as the Apostle speaks most closely, and affectionately of the near Union betwixt Christ and his Church, the Sacred Members of his Body. Eph. 5.30.

Again, This Consideration that Christ is risen and enter'd into Glory, should render us careful and solicitous, that we do not forfeit the Glories laid out and prepared for our Souls and Bodies hereafter, by an Impure, Unholy, and Sinful Life. We are now the *Temples of God*, consecrated, and made so by the Inhabitation of his Holy Spirit; and if any *Man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy*: Shall we then prostitute so Sacred, so Aweful a Dwelling, to be polluted by Swine, by vile and filthy Lusts; to be unhallow'd by the sacrilegious Hands of Iniquity; to become, instead of a Temple of God, a Den of Dragons, a Nest of Serpents, an empty Room for Devils, for all the Varieties of abominable Wickedness, and Works of outer Darkness? *Our Bodies are the Members of Christ; will a Man then take the Members of Christ and make them the Members of an Harlot?* Shall that Body, think we, ever arise and shine in Glory, that is a Slave to Lust, that falls a Sacrifice to a Strumpet, that dies in the fiery Pursuit or Accomplishment of an Adulterous Desire? 1 Cor. 3: 17.

Shall

Shall that Heart ever become the lightsome Seat of
Hof. 7. 6, 7. Bliss and Joy, that burns *hot as an Oven*, with Lewd
 and Vicious Inclinations, with Anger, Rage, Envy,
 Lust, and Strife; full of Wicked Imaginations, set only
 to devise, and entertain Evil, but which to do good has
 no Tendency, no Power?

Can that Flesh appear in the Last Day, and inherit
 the Kingdom of Heaven, in the full Strength and
 Beauty of Perpetual Glorified Youth, that is now daily
 consum'd in Intemperance, and sinks in the Surfeits of
 habitual Drunkenness and Gluttony, and then tumbles
 into the Grave, and pollutes the Ground that is under
 it?

Can that Head ever wear or become the Crown of
 Righteousness and Peace, in which dwells nothing but
 Craft and Avarice, Deceit and Fraud and Treachery;
 which is always plodding upon ungodly Designs of this
 World's Interest, rack'd with Ambition, rent asunder
 with Faction and Discord, ever inventing, and delight-
 ing in Mischief to others, and unjust Advantage to it self?

Isai. 33.
 17.

Shall *those Eyes ever behold the Heavenly King in His*
Beauty, and see that Blessed Land which we now think
afar off, that are full of Envy, Lust, and Pride, Adul-
 tery, Covetousness, Censoriousness, Hypocrisy?

Pf. 30. 12.

Shall that Tongue (which is *the Glory of a Man*,
 when rightly directed) be ever set to God's Heavenly
 Praises, and warble out the Harmony of the Blessed,
 that is now full of vain Swearing, Cursing, and Bitter-
 ness, Back-biting, and Slander, under *which is Ungodli-*

Pf. 10. 7.

Rom. 3. 31

Pf. 140. 3.

liness and Vanity, and the Poison of Asps?

Isai. 1. 15.

2 Pet. 2.

15.

Isai. 1. 14.

Mic. 7. 3.

Isai. 52. 7.

Ephes. 6.

15.

Will those Hands ever receive the Reward and Re-
 compence of Righteousness, that are *full of Blood,*
laden with the Wages of Iniquity, of Theft, Rapine,
 Violence, Extortion, Bribery, and other Unjust Gain?
 That are constantly employ'd to be the Instruments of
 Sin, and *join together to do evil, both Hands earnestly,*
 with Greediness, and hate to be reform'd?

Shall *those Feet* ever be *beautiful upon the Mountains*
 of Light and Joy, in the Realm and Climes of Bliss,
 that were never *shod with the Preparation of the Gos-*
pel of Peace, which have never known the *Way of*
Peace

Peace and Truth; which have made them Crooked Isai. 59. 8.
Paths; which are quite gone out of the Way of God's
Righteousness; which only run to Evil, and make haste Prov. 1. 16.
to shed Innocent Blood?

Thus we may see, by these few Instances, how inconsistent the whole *Body of Sin* is with the Glories of Rom. 6. 6. the Celestial and Resurrection-Body; and therefore if we desire those (And can we do otherwise?) that a due Representation of that Glory to our Minds, and the more often the better, and in the more numerous Particulars, is a strong Perswasive on us to leave and forsake our Sins, that so we may *be meet to be Partakers* of what we desire, *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Col. 1. 12.

Further yet, the *Resurrection of Christ* is an engaging Principle, and Argument on our Minds, not only to take us off from Sin and Wickedness, but to encourage, quicken, and enliven us in the Performance of what is good, because we *now* know how great a Glory 'tis possible for us to arrive at; and we are sure it shall be given us, and justly proportion'd to the Degrees of our Piety and good Works.

It is likewise a comfortable Aid and Support to our Minds, under all the heavy Pressures and Afflictions of this World; when we contemplate our Blessed Lord thus *made perfect through Sufferings*; and consider, that Heb. 2. 10. *if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him*; and 2 Tim. 2. 12. *that our present light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal* 2 Cor. 4. 17. *Weight of Glory.* We have known and heard, and read of the Patience and Meekness of *Jesus Christ*, and we see the End, how God rewarded him; and, if it be not our own Fault, so will he deal, in a due Proportion, with our selves.

This again should ease, and relieve, and heal our Sorrows, under the Loss of Friends, our nearest and dearest Relations; *For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God* 1 Thess. 4. 14. *bring with Him.*

And as this should raise our Hearts above all the Evils of this Life, so likewise should it lift and elevate our Affections above all the Goods, the Temptations, and

Colos. 3. 12. and Pleasures of it. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God; set your Affections on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth.*

Lastly, and to conclude this Particular, this mighty pregnant Thought and Reflection that *Christ* is risen from the Dead, should make us zealous in Good Works, ambitious to rise up to high and noble Degrees of Piety and Goodness, of Righteousness and Charity, of Temperance, Sobriety, and Abstinence, and all the other Blessed Fruits and Graces of the Holy Spirit Who sanctifies us. For this we *now* know, that not only according to the general Kinds and Quality of our Actions, our Recompence shall be given us; not only *2 Cor. 5. 10.* *that we must all stand before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, whether it be good, or whether it be bad; and that God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil; but we are assur'd also, that our Reward shall go in a just Proportion to the different Size, Degrees, and Advances of our Vertue and Goodness in this World; that he who soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and that he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Wherefore, my beloved Brethren, says the great Apostle, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.* This was St. Paul's Conclusion to his Divine and Excellent Discourse upon *Christ's Resurrection*, and our Resurrection consequent upon it; and it is our highest Encouragement, and ought to prove a most effectual one to our greater *profiting in Holiness*, and to our more industrious Practice of all manner of Righteousness and Goodness.

I might here have added a great many other Considerations to the former, or have further enlarg'd on those I have mention'd; but I have been so long already, that I must hasten to the *Second* and Last general Part of my Design; which is,

Secondly, To represent the Nature, Excellence, and Preference of this Divine Knowledge of *Christ and His Resurrection*

Resurrection, above all other : And this I observe, both as virtually contain'd in my Text, and as a natural and immediate Consequence from its Connection with the former Verses : St. Paul tells us, that he had quitted all Advantages and Priviledges, and therefore that of his Knowledge too, in the Law of Moses, and all things else, that he might know Christ, and the Power of His Resurrection. *What Things were Gain to me*, says the good Apostle, *those I counted Loss for Christ ; yea doubtless and I count all Things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for Whom I have suffer'd the Loss of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Christ ; and be found in Him not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith ; that I may know Him, and the Power of his Resurrection.* Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.

O Blessed Apostle ! How was thy Divine, Humble, and Noble Soul inspir'd, enliven'd, invigorated, even animated, and actuated, by the Love of God and of thy Dearest Lord ! When our cold and frozen Affections will part with nothing for his Sake ; not even with our Sins, which are none of God's Creatures, which are less and worse than nothing, and are Vanity, and Misery, and Death ; and that not even at the Request of him, Who is our Most Gracious and Merciful Redeemer, the Divine Benefactor of our Souls ! We impiously prefer almost every thing to him, and his Honour ; we make, and catch at any trifling Objection, either in Nature or Divinity, as a Reason for denying his Great Father's Being, or his own eternal Generation !

But all these our Imaginations are vain, and every Thought, that exalts it self against God must be cast down and brought into Subjection to the Knowledge and Obedience of Christ, if ever we will be wise or happy. 'Tis in the Knowledge of him, and in keeping his Commandments, that our true Knowledge and Wisdom lie, the Perfection of our Nature, and the Beauty of our Mind and Understanding. *But he that saith that he knoweth him, and keepeth not his Commandments is a Liar ; and hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his* 2 Cor. 10. 5. 1 Joh. 2. 4. 1 Joh. 2. 3.

Commandments; all our Confidence of our Knowledge of him, and Acquaintance with him, without this is vain and delusive: All our high Speculations about the Nature of God and his Attributes, about the Glorified State of our Saviour, about the Qualities and Excellence of our Resurrection-Body, about the immortal Duration of our Souls, and their Employment through all Eternity, are nothing else but Emptiness and Fume, and fond Impertinence in the Sight of God, without our dutiful and careful Obedience to his Laws: 'Tis such a Knowledge that God requires of us, and will accept of at our Hands; a Knowledge that descends from our Heads into our Hearts and Affections; that distils like

Deut. 32.
2. *the gentle Dew upon the tender Herb*, warming, healing, opening those Fountains and Issues of Life. Without this good and happy Effect all our Knowledge is vain, barren as the *Lybian Sands*, and can produce in us no Fruit unto Holiness, nor will have for its End Everlasting Life.

There is sometimes such a prodigious Distance between a Man's Head and his Heart, that scarce any Body would think they both belong'd to one and the same Person: Like the Description that great Master of Propriety, *Virgil*, gives us of *Evil Fame*;

† *Ingrediturq; Solo, Caput inter Nubila condens.*

Our Heads are often soaring aloft, amongst or above the Clouds, in aery, sublime, refin'd and subtil Speculations, but we walk still on Earth, we grovel upon Earth, our Conversation is on Earth, all our Practical Thoughts, our Hearts, our Affections, are Gross, Earthly, Sensual.

And what then will all our Knowledge profit us? Or what Good will our *vaunting in it bring us*?

Prov. 9.
12. If a Man be wise, he should *be wise for himself*, he should begin at home; bring home his Knowledge to himself, to his own Heart, to the vertuous Reformation of his Life and Practice. No Reach of High Matters, no Comprehension of Mysteries, even of Sacred Ones, without this, will render us either Wise or Blessed. If a Man could behold, and view the Sacred Body of the

Blessed Jesus ; if he could see and admire all the Streams of Heavenly Light and Brightness that issue thence, more especially from his Wounds ; nay, and state all the *Natural* and *Divine Philosophy* too, from which so much Heavenly Glory was the Result ; yet he, that loves and obeys the Same Most *Blessed Lord*, and has *never seen Him*, has more Interest in his Favour, and will be made more happy by him hereafter, ^{1 Pet. i. 8.} than the other, if he love less, and be less obedient.

That sort of Knowledge of *Christ* therefore is not what St. *Paul* so earnestly aspir'd after ; nay, he rejects and denies it all in another Place ; *Though we have known Christ in the Flesh*, says he ; that is, under any other Considerations and Respects, than what are properly Religious Ones, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. But this is the Knowledge St. *Paul* desir'd above all things, and for which he had forfeited all ; such a Knowledge of him, as will produce our most ardent Love of him, and such a Love as will turn all into Obedience, and such an Obedience as will continue without Interruption ; *For if ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My Love, even as I have kept my Father's Commandments, and abide in His Love.* ^{2 Cor. 5. 16.} ^{Joh. 15. 10.}

But without this, of what use is all our Knowledge, all our Learning ? Or what Advantage will it bring us ? If a Man, by a vast and imperious Reach of his Mind, could comprehend all Mysteries, and all Knowledge ; if he had an Heart of Understanding, as large as the Sand upon the Sea shore ; if he had not yet a Soul of Heavenly Charity, to love and obey his Lord, and to delight himself in his Glory, all this would not have the least Tendency to his Real and Final Happiness ; 'twould be only a sort of glittering Science ; only a more Specious, Copious Ignorance. ^{1 Kings 4. 29}

If within the large Compass of his Mind, he could take and hold and retain all *Histories* ; if he could see through, and discourse subtilly upon the Policies of all Nations, nay, and their Vices and Villanies too, which are more and greater ; if he could find out the Rise and Origin of all humane *Passions* ; if he knew exactly their proper Movements, their Progress, their

1 Kings 4.
33.

1 Cor. 2. 8.

2263

Con.

Consistencies : If, by the sharp Eye of his Soul, he could pierce through the Essence of every thing, and be able to lay down and determine the Foundation, the Constitution, the Bounds and Limits of every created Being here below, nay, and his own too, which is yet more *wonderful* than all : If he could discern the secret and hidden Springs of Motion, could pursue and trace it through all its Tendencies, Turns, and Inclinations, could find out all its Laws, its Properties, its Reflections, Glances, and Results : If he could determine and confine that fleeting Variety, that infinite Change and Inconstancy of Accidents, and could accurately describe all their Revolutions, Circumstances, and Alterations, that arise from the different Juncture and Complication of the Particles of Bodies in themselves, or from the Adjacency or Influence of other Bodies, above, or about them ; which contribute so mightily to the Chearfulness and Comfort of humane Life, to the Refreshment and Relish of our Bodies, and to the Gratification and Delight of our Minds ; yet all this vast Heap of Abilities, without the Knowledge and Love of God, and of his Blessed Son *Jesus Christ crucified and risen again*, all this would contribute nothing to his True, Substantial and Solid Happiness ; in the midst of all this Plenty he would be in want : A poor, plain, illiterate, ignorant, simple Christian, that only knows and does his Duty, would be better than he : For why ? The one knows God and the Way to his Everlasting Bliss, and the other does not : *For this is Life Eternal* (And what can be *John. 17. 3.* greater ?) *to know Thee the Only True God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.*

Is there then any kind of Knowledge of greater Eminence than this ? Any to be compar'd to it ? A Knowledge that makes us to be Partakers of the Divine Nature ; that raises, and exalts us above the Original Condition, or perhaps Design of our First Being ; and that brings us to the utmost Perfection that our Souls and Bodies are capable of receiving, in the Highest, Purest, and Noblest State of their Refinement and Purgation.

What are they among all the Arts and Sciences throughout the whole Circle of Learning and Knowledge

ledge, that are worthy, as this is, to claim and have such an Interest in our Affection, to engage our Attention, and all the Might of our Heads, and Hearts, and Industry? Shall a Man then, to the Neglect and Disparagement of this High and Heavenly Knowledge, pursue and hunt after that only, or chiefly, which, tho' it be worthy our Subordinate Endeavours, yet carries in it so much Vexation, and Vanity, for the present, and will leave us at last where it found us, or where we found that, to all Eternity? Can a Man take more Satisfaction in thin Humane Eloquence, than in the Substantial, *Lively Oracles of Almighty God Himself?* Will he find Pleasure, Delight, and Ravishment, in the Beauties of an Heathen Writer, an Historian, an Orator, a Poet, a Philosopher? And shall he be cold and unmov'd, listless and sleepy, when he has in his Hands *the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?* If he can be so, how does he then savour the Great Things of God or Heaven! How is he arriv'd at the *Genius* of a *Christian*! Those Sacred Books are the pure Fountains and Wells of *Salvation, from whence we may draw Water to Everlasting Life.* There all our Souls may be satisfied, as *with Marrow and Fatness; our Spiritual Thirst fully allay'd; our Original Appetite of Knowledge even satisfied with the Goodness of the Lord.*

Isai. 12. 3.

Joh. 4. 14.

Ps. 63. 5.

Jer. 31.

25.

Even those very Men themselves, whose Writings we so much admire: and we do well in doing so, as long as we do it in Subjection and Subserviency to Religion; how would those Great Men themselves, the Famous Orators of the Heathen World, *Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero*, if they had known the Gift of *Christ*; how would they have expatiated upon the Mercies of it! How would they have fir'd, dilated, and enlarg'd their own Hearts! Have inflam'd, have mov'd, have shook their Audience! * *Cicero* is said, in his Oration for *Ligarius*, by the Power of his Eloquence, to have made *Cæsar's* Papers of Condemnation and his Resolutions drop to the Ground: If these Men now had been speaking upon their own Eternal Justification, their Re-

* *Plutarch. in Vita Ciceronis.*

demption, their Resurrection, through the Blood and Death and Merits of the Lord *Jesus Christ*, with the Help of God's Grace, they would have made the Sins and Iniquities of Men have roll'd away from them and departed as a Scroll of Parchment.

And shall a *Christian's* Heart prefer any Knowledge before this ? Shall he be quite insensible, unaffected untouch'd with the Glories of his Dearest Lord and Saviour ? Those Glories too, which may be his own ; which the Lord *Jesus Christ* by his Death and Sufferings has purchas'd, has provided for him, and will surely confer on him if he be found obedient ? Where then is our Love of *Christ* or of God ! Where is our Sense and Feeling of all that God and his Blessed Son have done and suffered for us ! Or, if our Hearts be hot within us upon these Reflections, shall we not, can we not at last speak, and be eloquent with our Tongue ?

Rev. 6. 14.

How far this Divine Knowledge and Love of *Christ* prevail'd, when join'd with like Abilities as were in those brave Men I have mention'd, we see Two famous Instances in the Two great Orators of the Church of *Christ*, St. *Chrysostome* and St. *Basil* : How many Souls of Men, is it probable, were converted, were sav'd, went to Heaven, by their means, and through the Force of their divine and powerful Perswasions !

And truly what is all our Eloquence, if it be not sometimes employ'd to so noble a Purpose, worth ? Here is a sublime and excellent Subject indeed ! A Subject fit to engage the *Tongues of Angels* and Men, their Understandings, their Wills, their Affections, for ever ! And what is all our Wisdom, our Philosophy, our Mathematical Science, without this Knowledge, or in comparison of it ? 'Tis Folly, 'tis Emptiness in the Sight of God, the Great Creator, the Wise Author, and Governor of the World.

We labour hard, and *travel sore ; and much Study*, Eccles. 1. tho' it be our Duty, and the only Way to preserve a Scholar innocent, is yet a *Weariness to the Flesh* ; but Eccles. 12. Idleness is much more so, and of *making many Books*, there is no End : And after all, for a great Part of our Knowledge, how very precarious, how uncertain is it !

We,

Amos 9. 6. We, in our fond Imaginations, unbuild and *build* again God's *Stories in the Heavens*, as the Prophet *Amos* speaks ; we gird the Sphere with Circles :

* *With Centrick and Eccentrick scribbled o'er,
Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb :*

As a good Poet of our Nation very well expresses it, and pleasantly exposes our too high Pretences to Astronomical Knowledge. Sometimes we fancy we have found out the Point, whereon to fix the Foundations of the Earth ; and that, in the Language of the Book of *Job*, we have search'd out the Corner Stone thereof ; and God Almighty, all the while, sits above and smiles at our quaint Devices : And how easy is it with him, by one slight and gentle Turn of his Finger, in Nature, to baffle all our Wisdom, and to render all our Projects, our Presumption, and our Pride, contemptible.

God forbid, I should speak these things with a Design to cast any Slur or Disparagement upon any Part of Sound and Sober Learning ; what I have here said is only to abate our too high Conceit in preferring the Knowledge of any thing else to the Knowledge of God and true Religion ; to much better, to Divine and Spiritual Accomplishments ; and to take off our too great Confidence and Relyance on Humane Wisdom. Learning, with Religion *first*, is our great Business in this Place, and these our Studies are of admirable use, and may be converted to very Great and Noble Purposes, when God pleases ; in the mean time they whet, and improve, and enlarge, and employ our Faculties ; they *clear the visual Ray*, and sharpen the discerning Eye of our Soul ; they stock and enrich our Invention, and prepare and furnish our Minds with Refin'd, Choice, and Excellent Ideas, and Notices, which may be of the best service hereafter, and be brought out in time to come, to the Honour of Almighty God, and the great Advantage of his Church ; and God loves to see us studious and diligent ; and tho' we may not know, our selves, he knows what Service, one time or other, he has for

us, and for our Learning, and he will take care to reward us for all our Pains and Labour in Knowledge to his Glory. In the mean time, our Studies and Sciences are as so many Scaffolds to build up the Frame of our Minds: But we are not to stop there; these Things, in the Language of the Prophet, are *not our Rest, 'tis polluted, at best, 'tis imperfect, 'tis uneasy.* Mic. 2. 10.

Where then is Wisdom to be found, and where is the Place of Understanding! The Depth says, It is not in me, and the Sea says, It is not in me: It does not lie in the Discovery of *Natural Knowledge*, if it were ten times greater than it is; not in our Comprehension of the great *Deep that coucheth beneath*, nor of the Height of Heaven above, if by the vast Stretch and Extent of our Minds we could measure it; but Job 28. 12: 14.
Deut. 33. 13.
 God tells us where it is; for *to Man he said, The Fear of the Lord that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil is Understanding.* Job 28. 28. This is our Wisdom and Knowledge in the Sight of God, the Best and the Wisest Judge; and if we will take care and walk with Humility and Sincerity before him, and keep his Commandments, he will make us happy.

Let then all our Studies, our Application, our Endeavours; all our Abilities, our Improvements, our Attainments, be laid out to this great and noble End and Use, the Knowledge of God and of our Duty: Let every Art and Science we apply our selves to, instruct us in, or tend to a Lecture of Piety.

Let our Knowledge of *Grammar* and *Languages* lead us to the true Signification and Propriety of Words and Names, and teach us the mighty Force of little Particles, the great Instruments of all our Reasoning; that so we may be the better able to look into the true Sense, the better able to interpret the *lively Oracles of God*, to discern the Beauty, and Elegance, and Proportion of the whole Sacred Frame, and the just Coherence, Dependance, and Connection of every Part.

Let our Labour in *Logick* instruct our Reason how to search out, and to apprehend Truth rightly, and to

be able to maintain it; to unravel the Windings and Intricacies of Error, to drag it out of all its dark and crooked Turnings, its secret poisonous Lurking-holes into open Light, to confound and baffle it.

1 Pet. 3.
15.

That we may be better able to give a *Reason of the Faith and Hope that is in us*, to support and defend its Cause against all absurd and unreasonable Men that oppose themselves; Against Atheists, Deists, Scepticks, Papists, Presbyterians, Jews, Hereticks, Socinians, Arians, Semi-Arians, Infidels; all the black Race and serpentine Spawn of Errour, that seek to wrap in, to perplex, to entangle the Truth; to cast their own Poison, the Light of their own Darkness on it, to stain and sully it, and to pollute its Glory.

Exod. 4.
10, 11.

Let our *Rhetorick and Eloquence* be laid out and employ'd to his Honour that gave it; *For who has made Man's Mouth* (said God to Moses, when he pleaded his Want of *Eloquence* as a Reason to excuse him from serving God) *Who hath made Man's Mouth? Or who maketh the Dumb, or the Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind? Have not I the Lord?* Let then all our *Eloquence* return, and turn to his Praise, to recommend and enforce Obedience to his Laws, to set out the Advantages of Vertue and Piety, the Deformity and Inconveniencies of Sin and Vice; to discover, convince, and confound Iniquity; to bring *Men out of Darkness into Light, and to convert them from the Power of Satan unto God.*

Acts 26.
18.

Let our Spirit of *Poetry*, not the Least of Natural Gifts from Heaven to Men, be inspired to his Glory, from *Whom descends every good and perfect Gift*: Let it not spend its Force on Little, Idle, Useless Subjects, not in Amorous Descants, not in Frothy, Light, and Trifling Compositions; much less in recommending Sin and Vice, that Bane of our Souls, and Reproach to our Nature; but in displaying the Beauty and Loveliness of Vertue; in laying open the Wonders and Excellencies of God's Creation, in setting forth the various Ornaments of Nature, in exalting the Virtues and Perfections of Great Examples; so raising our
Appetites

James 1.
17.

Appetites and Desires of Goodness, whilst it holds up the Patterns of Excellency before our Eyes, to the Light, as in a well-drawn Picture. Let it be employ'd in Sacred Hymns and *Spiritual Songs* of Praise and Thanksgiving to Him Who form'd our Fancy, that Scene of Beauty and of Pleasure. Col. 3. 16.

Even our *Musick* it self, we know, which is one of the Liberal Arts, is compos'd and set to the Glory of God, and made one Part in the *Beauty of Holiness*, by the Sacred Appointment and Divine Direction of *King David and Solomon himself*: For whilst it gratifies our outward Sense, it lifts our Thoughts to Heaven, and is proportion'd, by Nature, to almost every Passion in our Souls; moving and exciting, taking down and soothing them; and soft'ning and healing whatever is harsh, grating, or corrosive in our present Temper. *Musick* is a Rational as well as a Sensual Pleasure; in it we attend to Harmony, Order, and Proportion; and from thence we may be drawn on to carry our Meditations higher; to consider the Exact Harmony and Order even of the Divine Nature it self; to contemplate the Consistence of God's Attributes without jarring; all conspiring to the Perfection of his Being, and that Sweet Concord of Justice, Order, and Regularity, in his Providence. 1 Chron. 25. 1, 2, &c.
2 Chron. 5. 12, 13.
1 Sam. 16. 23.
2 Kings 3. 15.

Let our Knowledge of those * High and Noble Sciences, the *Mathematicks*, refine, purge, and purify our Minds; teach us to abstract from sensible Things, and so be as a Scale and Ladder for us to ascend to the Contemplation of Things in Heaven.

Let our Acquaintance with *Geometry*, all our Knowledge and Skill in the Relations, Measures, and Properties of Lines and Figures, incline our Hearts to admire and adore God's Necessary and Eternal Truth, all Truths of this Nature being founded on the Divine (a) Unchangeable Ideas; and thereby 'tis, indeed, that

* Καθαροὶ Ψυχῆς λογικῆς εἰσιν αἱ μαθηματικαὶ ἐπισφαί. Hier.

(a) Τὸ γὰρ αἰεὶ ὄντος ἡ γεωμετρικὴ γνῶσις ἐστίν. Plato Polit. Lib. 7. Edit. Basil. Pag. 440.

our Understandings are confin'd ; that when once we know them, we cannot deny, but must acknowledge their Light and Evidence.

This Knowledge may likewise teach us to contemplate His Infinite Wisdom, (a) Who made all Things, at first, in just Proportion, in *Number, Weight, and Measure* ; *Who meted out the Heavens with a Span* ; *Who created the Earth, and stretch'd out a Line upon it* ; *Who measureth the Waters in the Hollow of His Hand* ; *Who weigheth the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance* !

Wisd. 11.
20.
Isai. 40.
12.

Let our Skill in *Astronomy*, when we look up, and view, and consider the Order, and Regularity, the wide and unknown Extent of the Heavens ; the Steadiness of their Motion ; the constant Variety of their Changes ; the immense and undefin'd Spaces in which those vast and numerous Orbs do roll, and move, without jostling their Spheres or jarring their Influences ; the beautiful Scene they draw, and distinguish, by their shining Gold, in the *Azure Vault* of of Heaven ; and then let us lift up our Hearts and our Eyes on high, higher than all these Heavens, and behold and contemplate, *Who hath created all these Things, that bringeth out their Host by Number, that calleth them all by their Names, by the Greatness of His Might ; for that He is Strong in Power, not one faileth.*

Isai. 40.
26.

Let our Art in *Arithmetick*, our Apprehension of the amazing, interminable Power of Numbers, dispose us to admire, and even to be astonished at the Infinite and Inconceivable Comprehension of his Mind, that knows *the Number of the Sands* ; that views them all, and counts them all up, at one single Glance of his Eye ; that keeps an Account of all the infinite Particles and Dusts of Matter throughout the Universe ; that reckons them all in his Remembrance, and lays them up safe ; not one escapes him.

(a) 'Ο Θεὸς Γνωμεῖται. *Dr. Barrow's Life.*

And this may serve to put us in mind likewise to recount his Mercies, as far as we can, for they are indeed innumerable; to remember our own Sins, which *are more in Number than the Hairs of our Head*; *Ps. 40. 12.* to enumerate his Tender and Fatherly Providences over us, *before Whom the very Hairs of our Head are all number'd.* *Matth. 10. 30.*

Let our Knowledge in *Natural Philosophy*, lead us to the Knowledge of the God of Nature, that we may admire his Wisdom, and observe his Laws: And let it fill us with an awful Reverential Sense of his Being and Power, who is the great Author and Framers of Nature; so far shall we be then, by looking no higher than Second Causes, from ungratefully denying his Being, or Providence, that we shall be confirm'd, and strengthen'd in our Belief and Acknowledgment of them.

For can a Man indeed be so *foolish* and *ignorant* before God, *even as a Beast before Him*, as to forget *Ps. 73. 22.* him who is the Great King and God of Nature; and to pay Homage and Adoration to Nature, his Creature, his Servant, his Instrument, which he, by a Sovereign Power, over-rules, controlls, governs, and changes, when, and in what manner, and as often as he pleases? (a) Why rather are not all they that make Enquiries and look into his Works of Wisdom, the more religious, dutiful, and devout towards him? They see part of his Ways, and observe the Track of his Feet; but themselves are sensible, they cannot make a full Discovery of the Immeasurable Depths of his Wisdom, of the Height and Mightiness of his Power.

Let our high Proficiency in *Metaphysics*, those Nice and Subtil Abstractions, but all deeply founded in our Reason, administer to more Sublime and Noble Contemplations, and be an Handmaid to *Divinity*, their proper and most necessary Place; but where I

(a) We have some Noble Instances of this in the Honourable and Learned Mr. Boyle, in Mr. Ray, Dr. Cheyne, &c.

have not room at present fully to describe the Excellency of their Use and Power.

Once more, Let our *Morality* and *Divinity*, the Sum and Perfection of all our Knowledge, which it most concerns us to be conversant in ; and to arrive at as great a Perfection in them as we can : Let the Study and Knowledge of these express and shew the Power and Influence they have upon our Minds, by the Purity and Holiness of our Lives, and the Regularity and Exactness of our Manners.

And last of all, and to put an end to this long Discourse ; after all our *Labour* and *Travel* in *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, to our own great Advantage and Comfort, and that of others ; after all our Abilities, all our Attainments ; let the Weakness and Imperfection of what we do know, and our Ignorance of so much yet still behind, teach us that Great, that High and *Christian* Lesson of Humility ; and our Humility will bring us near unto God, and God will reward and crown our Humility. For if we be truly humble, we shall be sure always carefully to remember, admire, and adore Almighty God, our Great Creator ; we shall not vaunt, nor boast our selves, or our own Perfections, we shall not set at nought, despise, or insult our meaner, our weaker Brethren. *The Wise Man will not glory in his Wisdom, neither the Mighty Man glory in his Might, nor the Rich Man glory in his Riches ; not even in the vast Extent and Compass of his Knowledge, and his prudent and skilful Application of it ; not in the Strength and Sinews of his Reason ; not in the Firmness and Soundness of his Judgment ; nor in the Life and Spirit, the Copiousness, Abundance, and Exuberance of his Fancy and Invention ; nor in the great Capacity and Security of his Memory : But he that glorieth will glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Him, that He is the Lord that exerciseth Loving Kindness, Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth ; for in these Things he delighteth, and to see us imitate his Great Example, and to endeavour to be holy, as He is Holy.* Which

Eccles. 2.
21.

Jer. 9. 23.

Which God the Father of Heaven grant we may all be, through the Grace and Merits of his Blessed Son our Lord *Jesus Christ*, whom he *brought again* ^{Heb. 13.} *from the Dead, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep,* ^{20.} by the Power and Influence of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Sanctifier of our Souls, and the ^{Rom. 8.} *Quick'ner of our mortal Bodies:* To whom All Three ^{11.} Most Blessed Persons in One God, be all Praise, Honour, Glory, Dominion and Majesty, Thanksgiving, and Power, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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 comforter, the sanctifier of our souls, and the
 victor of our mortal foes. To whom All Praise
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